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GOVERNORTIMOTHY P. MURRAY
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR**Media Contact**Juan Martinez
Kim Haberlin
Heather Johnson
Caitlin Coyle
617-725-4025

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Governor Patrick Announces Judicial Nominations Of Three Distinguished Attorneys To The District Court

BOSTON - Wednesday, August 4, 2010 - Governor Patrick today announced the nominations of three Boston-area attorneys as Circuit Justices of the District Court: Franco J. Gobourne, seasoned defense attorney and prosecutor and board member of the Sex Offender Registry Board, Antoinette E. McLean Leoney, Assistant United States Attorney, and Debra Shopteese, attorney with the Committee for Public Counsel Services.

"These three nominees will bring to the District Court bench an extraordinary wealth of legal expertise and compassion," Governor Patrick said. "I am proud to nominate them, and thank them on behalf of the Commonwealth for their willingness to serve and their dedication to the justice system."

Franco J. Gobourne began his law practice in 1993 as a criminal defense attorney with the Committee for Public Counsel Services. He also served the Commonwealth as an Assistant District Attorney in the Suffolk County District Attorney's Office and as an Assistant Attorney General. Gobourne enlisted in the Army, 82nd Airborne Division, after high school, and later served in the Marines and the Massachusetts National Guard. He completed a one-year tour in Iraq in 2008 with the 972nd Military Police Company from Reading, Massachusetts. He has served as an officer in the Army's Judge Advocate General's Corps since 2008. Gobourne is currently a member of the Sex Offender Registry Board. He graduated from the City University of New York, Queens College, and Boston College Law School and resides in Jamaica Plain.

Antoinette E. McLean Leoney has devoted most of her 26-year legal career to public service. She is currently a member of the Major Crimes Unit in the United States Attorney's Office, where she has excelled in a variety of roles since 1994. She also served Governor Dukakis as Deputy Legal Counsel from 1987 to 1990. Leoney has always been an active member and leader in numerous state and national bar associations and a dedicated mentor to lawyers of color in the Boston community. Leoney served on the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court's Commission to Study Racial and Ethnic Bias in the Courts. She is a resident of Cambridge and a graduate of Lesley College and the New England School of Law.

Debra Shopteese has spent the entirety of her 24-year legal career with the Committee for Public Counsel Services, serving as the Attorney-in-Charge for the Roxbury Defenders Division since 1999. Debra also teaches criminal trial advocacy at Northeastern University School of Law and is a Supreme Court Justice of the Native American Sac and Fox Nation, Thunder Clan. She is a resident of Jamaica Plain and a graduate of Kansas State University and Northeastern University School of Law.

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